l:Gabb N-5 (1873-1874) 1876
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believe in them. Some of the more intelligent or more civilized of the Indians, those who have been most in contact with foreigners, take foreign medicines when sick, but they are the exceptions. Their method of purifying an unclean person has already been described under the heads of child-birth and uncleanness. They also claim to bring or drive away rain. To do this, the doctor must have a pipe full of tobacco, or a cigar. He goes into the open air, smokes, blows the smoke in certain directions, calling out in an imperative tone of voice, "Rain, go to—" whatever place he may see fit to designate. Once when prisoners between two swollen rivers, forced to wait for them to fall low enough for us to ford; one of our few means of amusement was to give one of these fellows, in our suite, a pipe full of tobacco, and set him to clearing up the weather. He would go outside of our little hut, and between the puffs of smoke would call out, "Rain, go to Panama," "go to Chiriqui," "go to Cartago," in short, to every remote place of which he happened to know the name. It took him ten days before his efforts were crowned with success, and when ultimately the blue patches did begin to appear in the sky, he had the effrontery to calmly claim it as his doing! They also claim to "blow" a proposed route of travel, so as to drive away snakes and bring good luck on the route. In this case, the *modus operandi* is practically the same as for the weather. But their master efforts are when charming away sickness. To see the process, two of my companions feigned sickness and called in the services of one the doctors. He caused each one to procure a live chicken. Catching the animal by the neck and heels he made passes all over the body of the patient, in every direction. Any small animal will answer. Sloths, opossums, even young alligators are used, and are said to be equally efficacious.

After some minutes of this manipulation, he lighted a pipe and blew tobacco-smoke at them. Having given them numerous injunctions about diet, such as forbidding the use of coffee, tobacco, pepper, and salt for a day or two, he went outside the house, and spent half the night seated under an orange tree, singing a doleful ditty, enlivened at irregular periods by unearthly howls and groans. His fee for all this was, in addition to the two fowls, used in the ceremony, and which was all he would have received from an Indian, sixty cents from one and forty from the other; the fees being graduated by the gravity of the supposed infirmities. These doctors claim that their powers are based on the magic merits of certain charms they carry about with them. These charms are supposed to be calculi, extracted from the viscera of animals. Our friend, who tried to change the weather, possessed three of these. One purported to be from the liver of a sloth, another from the bladder of some other animal, &c. I examined them with a glass, and am convinced that they were mere fragments of little calcareous veins, common in the metamorphic rocks of the country, and which had been ground smooth by friction. My little knowledge of medicine, and a moderately well-supplied medicine-case, enabled me to make numerous cures, and of course I soon

276 **Narcotics.** Tobacco is used extensively by both the men and the women. It is chewed mostly by the men, but also by the women. All people, including the children, smoke cigarettes, and both sexes use wooden pipes.

When hungry and no food is available, or

[Continued on p. 11-B, first paragraph]

HOUSES

342 **Houses** are built straight from the ground, without any attempt at a foundation, the floor being of earth. Occasionally, a shallow ditch is dug around the whole as a drain, and sometimes a low base of earth is built up and kept in place by wooden poles laid horizontally and supported by short vertical poles (see fig. 5, *c*), or by several wooden planks. Houses like this have earthen steps as an entrance. The majority of the structures, however, have a single pole at the very base serving as a finish between the house and the ground, and, in a measure, as a protection against water seepage from the outside (see fig. 5, *b*). None have porches.

In the lower, warmer areas, such as Curré and Lagarto, the houses frequently have a row of stones around their base, and even a protruding terrace of stones at the front (see fig. 5, *d*). This offers better protection in wet weather, as these sites are low and subject to backwashes from the river when rains and floods are heavy.

342 824 The shape of Boruca houses is square or rectangular. They are made of wooden poles with grass roofs. The wood used is *palo de mayo* (May tree) or the María tree, *palo María* (*Calophyllum brasiliense* Camb. var. *Rekoi* Standl.). There are two kinds of *palo de mayo*. One kind has white wood and is identified scientifically as *Vochysia hondurensis* Sprague, while the other, which is preferred and has a pinkish tinge is probably *Vochysia ferruginea* Mart.? The *palo María* also has a pinkish wood, and is used only when the tree is very small. On the coast, the wood of the *huiscoyol* palm (*Bactris minor* Jacq.) is used for roof rafters when available. It is not used in Boruca, as this palm does not grow there.

342 **House Construction.** The poles which are the thickest are placed vertically at the corners, by the doors, and at intervals along the

[Continued p. 11-B, second paragraph]

[a] *Cydista pubescens* Blake, according to Dr. R. J. Seibert, Turrialba, Costa Rica.

3:Stone E-5 (1945) 1949
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Boruca

when working and extra strength is needed, the Indians chew a root from a plant called *cordoncillo* in Spanish. It is a member of the *Piper* family, and has various uses among these Indians (see pp. 20, 21, 27).

HOUSES

walls to serve as supports. The intervening space is filled in by not so thick poles placed very close together, either vertically as in figures 5, *c*, *d* and 4, *c*, or horizontally as in figure 9, *c*. When they are placed horizontally, they are woven in and out of the supporting vertical poles which, of necessity, are more numerous in this type of construction. When the wall poles are vertical, thicker poles are placed horizontally in a single line on the outside at the bottom, the center, and the top, acting as a supporting band to hold the wall in shape. These bands are bound to the other poles with fiber ropes.

There are three kinds of fiber used in house construction. The most popular, and practically the only kind found in Boruca houses, is that known as the *bejuco de fierro* or *negro*. This is a thick vine growing in the forest (perhaps *Anthurium scandens* [Aubl.] Engler).[21a] Its leaves resemble those of the bean known as *haba blanca*. From this vine, as many as eight cords are obtained, depending, of course, on the width desired. Another fiber used is called *bejuco de hombre* and is known also as *andariel*. This is really an aerial root and is found in house construction on the coast, around Palmar Norte, where the *bejuco negro* is not obtainable. The third type of fiber is made from the bark of a tree called *capulin blanco* (*Muntingia Calabura* L.). Sometimes both horizontal and vertical wall construction are found on the same house (see fig. 6, *a*). Windows are rare, but when present, the framework is always made of the thicker poles. The window shutter, however, is of planks and the hinges bought at *ladino* stores. Doors also have a framework of poles. The doors themselves are made of the small vertical poles following the vertical construction of the walls and are tied with vines, no hinges being used. Frequently, the walls have a rough coating of *bajareque* both inside and out. *Bajareque* is a mixture of cow dung and mud. Strangely enough, the

[P-65(A)] SA19 Talamanca SA19
Cabecar
Bribri

duLi

(*Cabécar*)

* 539
312
757
[262]

In the upper Coen, there are hot water holes called *duLi*. These were left by *sibu* so the Cabécares could cure their sores. When they bathe here, they cannot touch meat or salt for fifteen days.

THE PEJIBAYE

(*Bribri*)

* 539
824
846

sibu gave the *pejibaye* to the first people who were called *kabLawak*. Because of this one has to bathe with the fruit after a child is born, and in the early morning, chew it up and spit it out.

(16) TOBACCO[200]

(*Bribri*)

* 539
● 276
[261]

sibu was alone thinking and smoking when a little *gorrion* came and asked him what he was smoking and to give him some. *sibu* said that it was tobacco grown in Talamanca in the tobacco patch. That is why one can ask for tobacco. One cannot ask for food, however.

CACAO (CHOCOLATE)

(*Cabécar*)

* 539
776

sibu had four wives whose names were *siru*, *soro*, *tiŋə* and *spaLbu*. Most of them had their faults and did not make life easy for him. *soro* never wanted to cook the birds that *sibu* brought in from the hunt. *tiŋə* always moved her hammock far away. *spaLbu*, the most beautiful of all, always hung her hammock very high out of *sibu's* reach. In fact, the only wife who did everything he wanted and was always nice to him was *siru*, the ugly one.

Suddenly, however, *siru*, the ugly one, found herself transformed. *sibu* turned to her and said, "From now on, everyone will love you. You are the good one."

* 539
824

This is why there are four kinds of cacao in Costa Rica, and why the people of Talamanca call the best kind *siru* (*Theobroma cacao* L.). The *pataste* (*Theobroma bicolor*

[200] *See* Linguistic Texts: *dua* (tobacco).